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PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE IN URALS
IS CONSIDERED EFFECTIVE

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Health-maintenance measures are on a high level in Sverdlovsk Oblast, and in other large Ural industrial centers like Krasnouralsk, Revda, Nizhne Tagil, Tsvda, Kirovgrad, and others. Today the number of public health facilities in this industrial region is about double that of the prewar period.

Thirty five hundred medical enterprises have been established to maintain the health of the Ural workers. The hospitals and clinics attached to various factories are doing excellent work.

Measures adopted in the last year and a half, particularly the unification of hospitals and polyclinics have done most toward raising the general level of health. The following data will prove helpful in evaluating the efficiency of the present network: In 1947 only about 30 percent of the serious pneumonia patients were hospitalized. Today the general hospitalization average is 57 percent, and in Nizhne Tagil 70 percent.

It cannot be said, however, that the unification program was effected without any shortcomings. For example, even in Sverdlovsk several of the "united" enterprises were located far apart. In some cases, there was actually a "disunification" instead of a "unification." Much remains to be done particularly at Nizhne Tagil, where about 80 specialists' billets are filled by unqualified surgeons' assistants.

Surgical aid is still at a low level, especially at Nizhne Tagil and Revda. This situation will be rectified in the very near future.

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Much of the inefficiency is due to faults of the individual doctors. The surgeon attached to the Revdia Copper Smelting Factory closes shop at 3 p.m., and he will not even attend to emergency cases after that time. There is no doubt that surgical aid must be improved, particularly in those regions where metallurgical, coal, and mineral industries are located.

A recent commission of the Ministry of Health USSR, which investigated the health service in the Ural industrial region, revealed many interesting facts. It compiled comprehensive data on the functioning of health agencies in eight cities, and four rural rayon centers, 200 medical enterprises, and 80 medical institutions. Affairs in Sverdlovsk were the best. Many measures were proposed, and it is hoped that the 1949 addition of 500 new doctors to this highly industrialized region will help toward overcoming many of the present shortcomings.

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